

apology and financial reparations for interned Japanese Americans, and serving as the Chairman of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee. In 1995, Mr. Mineta returned to the private sector as a Vice President at Lockheed Martin. In addition, he served as Chair of the National Civil Aviation Review Commission, which offered a number of proposals for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reform that were adopted by President Clinton. In 2000, Mr. Mineta became the first Asian American to serve in a Presidential Cabinet when he was named as President Clinton's Secretary of Commerce. The following year, President George W. Bush asked him to serve as his Secretary of Transportation, where he played a key role in the nation's response to the attacks of September 11. In 2002, the San Jose International Airport was renamed the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport in honor of this native son. In 2006, President Bush awarded Mr. Mineta with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States. He has also received the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun from the Japanese Government.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and honoring Mr. Mineta's contributions and service to our country and to the city of San Jose.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1377, a resolution honoring the accomplishments of Norman Yoshio Mineta. As a proud member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), I think it is important to honor Mr. Mineta, the founder and first chair of the organization, and I commend my colleague, Mr. HONDA for introducing this resolution.

Despite suffering a great historic injustice and spending several difficult childhood years in an internment camp during World War II, Norm Mineta has dedicated much of his life to public service. Mr. Mineta served our country in the Army as an intelligence officer in Korea and Japan before starting his political career as the first minority city council member in San Jose, California. He went on to serve as San Jose's mayor, after which he became a Member of Congress. Mr. Mineta was also a trusted adviser to presidents of both political parties, serving as Secretary of Commerce in the Clinton Administration and as Secretary of Transportation under President George W. Bush. In these capacities, Mr. Mineta achieved many significant accomplishments in transportation, technology, national security, commerce, and minority rights.

Norm Mineta is a true leader of our country, and it is only fitting that he is honored for his lifetime of commitment and work. I encourage my colleagues to support H. Res. 1377, and look forward to its passage.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1377.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

DEFICIT REDUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I have been troubled by what seems to me a mistaken focus in the debate about reducing the deficit. I do agree that it is important to reduce the deficit. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I now believe that I am more focused on reducing the deficit than many of my colleagues, including on the other side of the aisle, who have with great alacrity put deficit reduction aside in favor of a fairly indiscriminate degree of tax reductions.

A couple of weeks ago, we were told that reducing the deficit was the number one priority, but reducing the taxes, particularly on the wealthiest in America, rapidly overtook deficit reduction. I hope we will get back to it. What troubles me is the extent to which people, mainly on the Republican side, but elsewhere as well, have said that what we need to do most to get the deficit down, as we should, is to reduce entitlements. That's a polite way of saying they want to cut Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid, even though Medicaid is not an entitlement. But those are the things that are on the agenda.

In fact, that is neither socially or economically the sensible way to begin with the short-term—near-term deficit reduction we need. We shouldn't say short-term. We do, I believe, need some stimulus. I'm glad we are extending unemployment compensation. I wish we were doing more to help cities and States keep people on the payroll. The private sector has added jobs in these past few months. Job growth has been held down because the public sector has been forced at the State and local level to fire people. But this focus on Medicare and Social Security is mistaken economically and politically.

Mr. Speaker, let me calculate; about 45 years ago, I took an economics course in graduate school from a young assistant professor named Henry Aaron. I was impressed with him then, and I've been impressed with him since. In the New York Times recently he had an article in the op ed page headlined: "All or Nothing Equals Nothing," in which he argued that the focus on reducing the deficit by 2020, which is the

time we've set ourselves, which is very important, is an issue that should not encompass a focus on Social Security and Medicare.

He is not saying ignore Social Security and Medicare, only that a rational way to go after the deficit in the near term wouldn't focus on them. And Social Security, as he points out, Social Security is not going to be contributing to the deficit at that point. Indeed, Social Security at this point is in such good economic shape that people have decided Social Security should be a contributor to economic stimulus because we are reducing the revenue that comes into Social Security for 2 years by reducing the payroll tax.

Now I think that's a useful stimulus, but I regret the fact that it was not accompanied by a binding piece of legislation that will return that money from elsewhere in the general fund so that we don't put Social Security further in the hole. But as Henry Aaron points out, yes, we should begin to look at Social Security and the problems of 30 years from now. My own view is that you do that mostly by increasing the level of income on which the tax is levied, but there is no need to begin doing that right away.

I should have said this earlier, Mr. Speaker. Two of the greatest accomplishments of America in the 20th century, Social Security and Medicare, accomplished an important goal. They made it the case that poverty was no longer going to be the rule for many older people. Prior to Social Security and then Medicare, poverty was too often the reward for living long enough if you weren't rich. We have brought older people on the whole—not entirely—out of poverty. There are still enough low-income older people that I greatly regretted the fact that this House and the Senate, which are apparently ready to give multimillionaires tax breaks, couldn't support \$250 per person for Social Security recipients, some of whom were wealthy but many of whom are quite poor. And I have people saying, Well, you don't want to give Warren Buffett \$250. Mr. Buffett, to his credit, has objected to a \$250,000 grant that he is being offered—more than that—in the tax reduction that is being offered—tax reduction from what current law would be.

But Henry Aaron makes the point that focusing on Social Security is taking up a very controversial issue way prematurely. And as for Medicare, here is what he said, which is of great social and economic importance: "To slash Medicare and Medicaid spending before reforms to the health care system bear fruit would mean reneging on the Nation's commitment to provide standard health care for the elderly, the disabled, and the poor. The only realistic way to realize big savings in the two programs is to reform the entire health care payment and delivery system in a way that will slow the growth of all health spending."

I am asking, Mr. Speaker, that Members read this. Henry Aaron is a great